To the south of the western gateway is the tomb of Qutb Sahib. It is a simple structure enclosed by wooden railings. The marble balustrade surrounding the tomb was added in 1882. The rear wall was added by Fariduddin Gajju Shah as a place of prayer. The western wall is decorated with coloured floral tiles added by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

The screens and the corner gateways in the Dargah Complex were added on to by Farrukhsiyar. The Dargah of Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki continues to be a sacred place for the pilgrims of different religions. Every week on Thursday and Friday qawwals is also performed in the dargah.

5. ZAFAR MAHAL COMPLEX

Adjacent to the western gate of the Dargah of Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, this complex has various structures built in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Zafar Mahal was the last palace built during the final years of the Mughal era, by Akbar Shah II (early nineteenth century). Paterned on the Mughal configuration of spaces, with a sequence of dâlans (colonnaded verandas) and rooms around courts, it is a lofty, three-storied, brick and grey stone structure, decorated with plaster, red sandstone, and marble. Its western wall is decorated with coloured floral tiles added by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

The screens and the corner gateways in the Dargah Complex were added on to by Farrukhsiyar.

The Dargah of Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki continues to be a sacred place for the pilgrims of different religions. Every week on Thursday and Friday qawwals is also performed in the dargah.

A two-storied dâlan leads further south to the palace buildings beyond and the thirteenth-century tomb of Alauddin, nephew of Ghiyath-ud-Din Iltutmish. Facing the Hathi Gate is a two-storied European style building (nineteenth century), characterized by painted pilasters on the exterior and a marble screen.

To the north of the various dâlans, lie the graves of Shah Alam I, Shah Alam II, Akbar Shah II and Mirza Fakhruddin, enclosed within an exquisitely carved marble screen. According to popular myth, the space left empty was meant for the grave of Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was however exiled after the Mutiny and died in Burma.

To the north-east of the palace enclosure lies an exquisite mosque, the Moti Masjid, built in white marble by Bahadur Shah I in the early eighteenth century as a private mosque for the royal family and can be approached from the palace dâlans as well as from the Dargah Complex.

QUTBUDDIN BAKHTIYAR KAKI DARGAH AND ZAFAR MAHAL COMPLEX

This publication has been made possible by World Monuments Fund's Sustainable Tourism Initiative, sponsored by American Express.
Phoolwalon ki Sair, also known as Sair-e-Gul Fumishan, has now evolved into an annual three-day celebration. The tradition was started by Rogum Mumtaz Mahal, the wife of the Mughal emperor Akbar Shah II. The legend is that if her son Mirza Jahangir was released from British custody, she would offer a chhaadar (blanket) of flowers at the shrine of Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki. An enthusiastic flowers offered a large floral palkha (base), which was hung from the ceiling of the dargah (shrine). In order to enable the Hindus in the congregation to be part of the celebrations, it was decided to offer the palkha at the nearby Yagnayya Temple as well (see map). The court stayed in Mehrauli for seven days; the men flew kites, swam in the basauli (step-wells) and in the Hauz-e-Shamsi, enjoyed cock fighting and wrestling; the ladies enjoyed the seasonal flowers in the mango orchards, on swings hung from the branches of mango trees, enjoying the seasonal crop of mangoes and singling.

The event became an annual festival, continuing even after Emperor Akbar II and reached its pinnacle during the reign of Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. It was steered by the British in 1942, during the Quit India Movement but was revived in 1961 by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as a symbol of communal harmony.

Phoolwalon ki Sair, has now gained popularity as an inter-faith festival that brings together both Hindus and Muslims, in secular celebration. Palkhas and chhaadars of flowers are made at the Jama Masjid and carried along the central street of Mehrauli village by both Muslims and Hindus. As per the tradition, the chhaadars are offered at the Dargah of Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki and the palkhas at the Yagnayya Temple. A festive air prevails in the streets of Mehrauli that are decorated with flowers and stalls sell various items like bangles, toys, garments, and handicrafts.

Trayynaga Temple — also known as Yogaayna — stands in Mehrauli in the vicinity of the Qutb Minar Complex, very close to Anangtal, a tank built in the tenth century by King Anangpal, of the Tomar clan. Dedicated to Goddess Yagnayya, the stone of the Hindu God, Krishna, legend has it, that the temple is one of the surviving temples from the Mughal period. The present structure however dates to relatively modern times.

The name Jharna literally means ‘waterfall’, and was for a long time, just an overflow from the Hauz-e-Shamsi during the monsoon. The cascade was integrated into a char kha (well) by the Mughal gardeners during the late Mughal period.

Located to the south of the Jahaz Mahal and the Hauz-e-Shamsi, the Jama Masjid complex has two gateways, one to the north and the other to the east. There are several structures in the garden. Around 1790, Nawab Ghaziuddin Khan Feroz Jang built a pavilion or baradari which was rectangular in plan and the façade had three cusped arches. The cascade of water was designed to fall behind the fountain and flow into the tank, which is linked by a channel of water to a second tank, in the centre of which sits a square pavilion that is supported on pillars. Built by the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar (r. 1837–57), a third pavilion to the north of the enclosure was built by the Mughal emperor Akbar II (r. 1806–57), is rectangular in plan and is set against the wall of the enclosure.

Water no longer flows through the garden as it has been diverted to a stream to the south-east of the complex.

Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki who lived during the reign of Iltutmish (1210–36), died in Delhi in 1235. He was a scholar and a disciple of Muinuddin Chishti. Khwaja Qutbuddin whose original name was Bakhtiyar and later given the title Qutbuddin was born in 1173 in the small town of Aush in Central Asia. He established the Chishti order in Delhi as desired by his spiritual master, Muinuddin Chishti. On his death, his grave became a popular shrine and over a period of time, the dargah was added to by various rulers, reaching its current form, perhaps around 1944.

What is perhaps the oldest dargah in Delhi extends along the palace complex of Zafar Mahal, having several entry points. The northern gate of the dargah was built by Shahjahan Khan in 1542, a descendant of Saint Fariduddin Ganj-e-Shakar who was the successor of Qutb Sahib.